

THE GUNFIGHTER

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 10



366TH FIGHTER WING, MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE, IDAHO

New cell phone restriction takes affect on base

By STAFF SGT. MATTHEW ROSINE
AIR FORCE PRINT NEWS

As of Feb. 27, the Air Force has implemented a new cell phone restriction for drivers – drivers are not allowed to talk on their cell phones while driving on Air Force installations without a hands free device. This policy is part of the Department of Defense’s Joint Traffic Guidance.

This restriction also applies to all vehicles at all times. No drivers are permitted to talk on a cell phone while driving without a hands-free device on or off base.

“This is really a cooperative effort for everyone from the base populace to the base leaders,” said Master Sgt. Gloria Ornelas, the superintendent of law enforcement for Air Force Security Forces. “I think it is long overdue. The DoD recognized that, and we are now in line with what some states and municipalities are doing to create a safer environment for drivers.”

Joint Traffic Regulation, Air Force Instruction 31-218 (I), Motor Vehicle Traffic Supervision, will restrict the use of cell phones while driving. Only cell phones with hands-free devices will be allowed for use by drivers. This guidance also allows the Air Force to use portable breath screening devices as long as they conform to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration standards.

The Defense Department’s joint traffic document states:

“Vehicle operators on a DoD Installation and operators of Government owned vehicles shall not use cell phones unless the vehicle is safely parked or unless they are using a hands-free device.

“The wearing of any other portable headphones, earphones or other listening devices (except for hand-free cellular phones) while operating a motor vehicle is prohibited. Use of those devices impairs driving and masks or prevents recognition of emergency signals, alarms, announcements, the approach of vehicles, and human speech. DoD component safety guidance should note the potential for driver distractions such as eating and drinking, operating radios, CD players, global positioning equipment, etc. Whenever possible this should only be done when the vehicle is safely parked.”

Using a cell phone while driving without a hands-free device will be considered a “primary offense.” This means violators will be able to be stopped solely for this offense.

“Drivers who violate this cell phone driving restriction will be issued an Armed Forces traffic ticket here at Mountain Home Air Force Base,” said Capt. Eric Springer, 366th SFS commander. “They will also be accessed three points on their driving records and repeat violators can lose their on base driving privileges for at least six months.”

Drivers should be aware that if two or more violations are committed, even on a single occasion, a ticket may be given to the driver for each violation.

“It was recognized at the DoD level that we needed some changes,” Sergeant Ornelas said. “The winner here is the base populace. They will have more mobility while driving, a greater range of view – in short, a safer driving environment for all.”

Col. Charles Shugg, 366th Fighter Wing commander, or a designee will determine the suspension and revocation periods. However, the revocation must be for a period of more than six months.

“The safety of the Gunfighters and their families is a responsibility the wing leadership takes seriously,” said Lt. Col. Glenn Winkler, 366th FW director of staff. “Gunfighters who operate motor vehicles place themselves at a higher risk for personal injury should they violate this regulatory guidance.”

Gunfighters kick off AFAF campaign

By 2ND LT. ERIN TINDELL
GUNFIGHTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Gunfighters will have an opportunity to give each other a helping hand when the annual Air Force Assistance Fund campaign kicks off Monday and runs until April 21.

AFAF was established to raise money for the four charities whose efforts help active-duty Airmen, reservists, guardsmen, retirees and their dependents.

“This is the fundraiser drive that directly benefits our service members,” said Capt. Jennifer Hillberg, 366th Fighter Wing AFAF project officer. “Contributing to any of the four worthy funds ensures that the legacy of Airmen Helping Airmen continues.”

Last year AFAF raised more than \$21.6 million and helped more than 30,000 Airmen. In 2005 Gunfighters received \$204,570 in assistance, Captain Hillberg said. This year Mountain Home AFB’s contribution goal is \$57,903.

Special activities for this year’s fund include a free kick-off breakfast Monday at the Gunfighters club and a golf tournament at the Silver Sage Golf Course April 7 that concludes with a barbecue for participants.

AFAF Representatives

366th FW 1st Lt. Ryan Biladeau, 828-3399	366th MXG Master Sgt. Todd Paile, 828-2729
366th MDG Master Sgt. Robert Tejada, 828-7759	366th OG 1st Lt. Derrick Lewis, 828-1688
366th MSG 2nd Lt. Kevin Bulley, 828-2442	Battlelab Master Sgt. Paul Weber, 828-3524

Representatives will be available within each squadron on base to provide donation forms and more information. Gunfighters can contribute through cash, check, money order or payroll deduction to the following charities:

• **The Air Force Aid Society**, the official charitable organization of the Air Force which provides airmen and their families with worldwide emergency financial assistance, education assistance and an array of base level

community-enhancement programs. Base family support centers have full details on programs and eligibility requirements. Information is also available online at www.afas.org.

• **The Air Force Enlisted Villages** in Fort Walton Beach, Fla., near Eglin Air Force Base, which provides rent subsidy and other support to indigent widows and widowers of retired enlisted people 55 and older. More information is available at www.afenlistedwidows.org.

• **The Air Force Village Indigent Widow’s Fund**, a life-care community in San Antonio for retired officers, spouses, widows or widowers and family members. The Air Force Village Web site is www.airforcevillages.com.

• **The General and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation**, which provides rent and financial assistance to indigent widows and widowers of officers and enlisted people in their own homes and communities. The LeMay Foundation Web site is www.lemayfoundation.org.

Contributions to the AFAF are tax deductible. For more information, visit <http://afassistancefund.org> or the Air Force Personnel Center’s voting and fund-raising Web site at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/votefund.

For more information about the fund, call Capt. Hillberg at 828-7113.

IRAQI AIR FORCE TAKES GIANT STEP FORWARD



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. LANCE CHEUNG

AN IRAQI CREWMEMBER AND STAFF SGT. DOMINIC PECORARO (LEFT) WATCH CAREFULLY FOR ENEMY WEAPONS FIRE FROM THEIR C-130E HERCULES. IF NECESSARY THE LOADMASTERS HAVE FLARES THEY CAN FIRE AWAY FROM THE AIRCRAFT TO DISTRACT VARIOUS WEAPONS. THE IRAQI LOADMASTER IS ASSIGNED TO THE 23RD SQUADRON, NEW AL MUTHANA AIR BASE ON BAGHDAD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, IRAQ. SERGEANT PECORARO IS FROM THE 517TH AIRLIFT SQUADRON AT ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE, ALASKA.

By STAFF SGT. MELISSA KOSKOVICH
GUNFIGHTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

(Editors note: Sergeant Koskovich is currently deployed to U.S. Central Command Air Forces Public Affairs)

BAGHDAD, Iraq - A fully certified aircrew takes flight and a single air base opens its gates. To Iraqi Airmen training alongside U.S. Airmen these feats represent giant steps toward independence and national security.

Since November, the Air Force has taken on the mission of standing up the Iraqi Air Force, allowing Iraqis to gradually take over operations and help secure their nation’s future.

“In only a few months (the Iraqi Air Force) has made significant progress,” said Brig. Gen. David W. Eidsaune, Air Component Coordination Element director. “We’re working closely with them on a plan for their future. We agree on where they’re going and how to get there.”

Iraqi Airmen agree progress has been made, but know there’s still a long road to travel.

“We are starting over,” said Maj. Gen. Kamal Barzanji, Iraqi Air Force chief of staff. “America has given us a lot of help, and we have already accomplished many things, but we need to keep growing.”

However, building an air force is no simple undertaking. General Eidsaune said Iraqis will face many challenges.

“One of the major challenges for them is funding,” General Eidsaune said. “The whole country is really stretched right now as far as funding and commerce, and air forces are not cheap entities. It will take them time to build up their capabilities.”

To help, the United States gave Iraq a small fleet of C-130 Hercules. But funding alone is not the only obstacle the fledgling air force faces. Recruiting the next generation of Iraqi Airmen will also be a challenge.

“Right now, most Iraqi Airmen come from the ‘old air force’—prior to the 1990s,” General Eidsaune said. “The Iraqis need to recruit more Airmen, and build up

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IN THIS ISSUE

Squadron commander expresses thanks for Air Force benefit never marketed

So often when trying to recruit new military members, or retain top members contemplating separating from the Air Force, I mention the typical benefits that always come to mind such as tuition assistance, 30 days paid vacation days plus

all Federal holidays off, commissary and BX privileges, tax-free housing allowance or base housing with no utility bills, and of course free healthcare.

But when my husband was recently diagnosed with a brain tumor, other than the free medical care, these other benefits never crossed my mind.

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366th MDOS helps Gunfighters stay healthy

Bring them your sick. Bring them your weary. Bring them your faint of heart. The professionals assigned to the 366th Medical Operations Squadron will heal them just



the same.

The four flights – medical services, women’s health, surgical operations and life skills –provide many of the same services as their civilian counterparts ...

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Seatbelts save Gunfighter, families lives

“When people tell you that seat belts save lives, they’re not just

empty words – and my family is living testimony to that,” said Staff Sgt. Eugene Williams, 726th Air Control Squadron, whose family was involved in a single car roll-over on I-84 Feb. 18.

Sergeant Williams was driving back to Mountain Home Feb. 18 when his truck hit a patch of black ice while driving in a snowstorm.

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How to deal with identity theft

Identity theft is an increasingly common occurrence. Two studies concluded that there were 7 million victims between June 2002 and 2003. The Federal Trade Commission number is closer to 10 million but also includes credit card takeover.

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Our most precious benefit never marketed

LT. COL. DEBORAH BEATTY
366TH MDOS

So often when trying to recruit new military members, or retain top members contemplating separating from the Air Force, I mention the typical benefits that always come to mind such as tuition assistance, 30 days paid vacation days plus all Federal holidays off, commissary and BX privileges, tax-free housing allowance or base housing with no utility bills, and of course free healthcare.

But when my husband was recently diagnosed with a brain tumor, other than the free medical care, these other benefits never crossed my mind.

Within 30 minutes of my

world being rocked, I had several neighbors who were willing to ensure my children were cared for that evening and taken to school the next day. Within eight hours, my first sergeant had my sister set up with commissary and BX privileges and a medical power of attorney should my kids need healthcare. Numerous people offered any assistance we needed from trips to and from the airport, meals, childcare, groceries to bringing items to the hospital in Boise. Friends in the medical profession, stationed here and across the country researched options for the best place to receive further specialty care should Jeff need it. My group commander granted me a flexible

work schedule to accommodate family needs. ACC and assignments personnel offered me a humanitarian assignment to the base of our preference, so we could be near family or closer to the medical care Jeff required. I can't tell you what a relief it was to know I didn't have to sacrifice my 22-year career to deal with a family emergency.

In times of crisis, the Air Force really looks after its people, regardless of rank, and ensures all their needs are met. Sometimes, the Air Force will even fund a plane ticket home if a sudden family illness occurs. I doubt many civilian companies would do that.

I know each squadron has

numerous examples of members who were in need and received medical, financial or emotional support from the Air Force. There are several agencies on base standing by to offer their help, such as the family support center, Operation Warmheart and even Air Force Aid (whose campaign runs on base from Monday through April 22).

While most of us are young and healthy, financial problems, a sudden family illness or incapacitating accident can happen. What a relief it is to know a strong and steady support system is in place to help us deal with whatever cards life deals us.

Of course the medical benefit is also huge. I was comforted knowing we would be sent for

the specialty care Jeff needed with no upfront payments required. Within five days, we had accumulated over \$35,000 in medical costs and faced \$7,000 a month in pharmaceuticals. Yet, I didn't have to spend a dime on co-pays or deductibles. I hope you never have to use your full medical benefits or the tremendous support system the Air Force family offers. But what a comfort it is to know when you do need help the most, you will be well taken care of!

This type of benefit will be one I will market to my troops from now on. Jeff and I wish to express our sincere appreciation to our Air Force and Gunfighter family.

COMMANDER'S HOTLINE



COL. CHARLES SHUGG

This Hotline is your direct line to me.

It's your opportunity to make Mountain Home Air Force Base a better place to live and work. I review every response to Hotline questions, but functional experts prepare most responses.

If possible, you should first contact the organization responsible for the problem or function. Your first sergeants, commanders and agency chiefs want to help, so please let them try.

If you do not know how to proceed or if you have already tried your chain of command, then do not hesitate to contact the Hotline at 828- 6262 or e-mail Commanders-Hotline@mountainhome.af.mil.

Not all Hotlines are published, but if you leave your name and phone number or e-mail address, I will make sure you get a reply.

COL. CHARLES SHUGG
366TH FIGHTER WING
COMMANDER

2005 AWARDS	
<i>As of this week</i>	
Air Force	13
ACC	45
12th Air Force	7

LAST DUI	
366th Equipment Maintenance Squadron	
Days without a DUI:	
4	
AADD made 70 saves in February, and 203 so far this year <i>(Courtesy of AADD)</i>	



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Coverage: Coverage of upcoming events should be arranged in advance by calling the public affairs office at 828-6800 or by sending an electronic message to pa.news@mountainhome.af.mil.

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The grass is pretty green on this side of the fence

BY SENIOR AIRMAN BRIAN STIVES
GUNFIGHTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

So much in life depends on perspective.

When I was a child, I used to think, "I can't wait to be an adult." But when I became an adult and began taking on adult responsibilities, I sometimes thought, "I wish I could be a kid again."

When I was single, I'd think, "It would be so nice to be married." When I got married, I always thought, "It is so nice to be married." And I'm not just saying that to avoid sleeping on the couch tonight.

Honest.

Before I joined the Air Force, my wife and I started talking and I began thinking, "It would be nice to join the Air Force." But after I signed on the line and swore to serve, I sometimes thought, "It would be nice to be a 'civilian' again."

And I have to be honest and admit I

still have that thought occasionally. I think most Airmen would agree that life in this Air Force can be difficult sometimes. But before you quit reading and call me a whiner, hear me out.

Many of us move all over the world every few years. Some bring families along, and some of these families include children who will grow up and wonder where home is. As adults, someone will ask them where they are from, and the only real answer they'll have to give is, "Everywhere."

And then there's the issue of working long hours at sometimes-tedious jobs. The average Air Force member probably spends about 50 to 55 hours a week at work, and sometimes more. And during some of those weeks of really long hours, like during last week's Phase II exercise, many of us purposely wear gear that makes us sweat profusely and sound like

Darth Vader when we talk.

And then there are deployments. Some of us spend more time in the desert than we do at home. And nearly all of us spend at least a few months every few years away from our homes and families.

Yep. I think the Air Force life can be hard sometimes. But I'm also pretty sure there aren't too many jobs that are more rewarding.

I used to give tours at Dover Air Force Base, Del., and I've seen the look of admiration on a child's face when they see someone in an Air Force uniform. I've fought back patriotic tears as I've heard dozens of people, from senior citizens to elementary-school students say, "Thanks for serving our country."

I've also heard the comments of Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps students as they've talked about the great time they had during a C-5 Galaxy orientation flight. "I

threw up," they'd say with a smile, "And it was so awesome!" Many of them shared their dreams of joining the Air Force someday.

I've told family and friends of the horrors of Air Force life and how sometimes I wished I had a civilian job again, only to hear some say, "Brian, stick it out. Trust me. You've got a good life and you'll be glad if you do."

And you know what, I've come to the conclusion that they're right. I get a good, steady paycheck and 30 days paid vacation every year. My family has free healthcare. I pay nothing for the home where we live. I pay almost nothing to pursue my college education. And the list of benefits goes on and on.

But the best benefit of serving is the appreciation of millions of Americans who are proud of our service. From that perspective, the Air Force life looks pretty good.

Celebrating legacy of women in history

BY STAFF SGT. GARETT MCCLINTON
366TH OPERATION SUPPORT SQUADRON

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of articles about Women's History Month.

Mary Edwards Walker is best known as the only woman to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor. During her life she was also known as a feminist, abolitionist, prohibitionist, spy, prisoner of war and surgeon.

Mrs. Walker was born in Oswego, N.Y., in November of 1832. Mrs. Walker, along with her four sisters, was educated on a daily basis and raised to believe strongly in equality for all. She was dedicated to being a doctor and in order to pay for her tuition at

Syracuse Medical College, she taught school and in 1855 became the second woman in the United States to graduate as a doctor.

Shortly after graduating, she married a fellow doctor and opened their own practice. Due to the fact that women were not trusted or respected as doctors, their practice went under.

It was not until the beginning of the American Civil War when she started her journey toward greatness. She chose to volunteer with the Union Army as a civilian because at that time the Union Army wouldn't commission women as medical officers. She served at the First Battle of Bull Run and at the Patent Office Hospital in Washington, D.C., in 1861. For nearly two years, she continued to assist as an unpaid field surgeon near the Union front lines

until her sacrifices were finally noticed in September 1863 when she was commissioned as a "Contract Acting Assistant Surgeon (civilian)" by the Army of the Cumberland, becoming the first female U.S. Army Surgeon.

She then moved on to join the 52nd Ohio Infantry as an assistant surgeon. It was at this time that some considered her to be a spy, because she would frequently cross the battle lines to treat opposing civilians. She was eventually arrested as a spy by the Confederate Army on April 10, 1864. She was a POW for just over four months when she was released during a prisoner exchange. She then served during the Battle of Atlanta in which she continued to provide distinguished medical care.

The Battle of Atlanta was her last combat medical experience, as

she went to Louisville, Ky., to supervise a female prison before moving on to manage an orphanage in Tennessee. After the war, she became an influential writer and lecturer and wore nothing but men's clothing to help support her views on dress reform.

Gen. William T. Sherman and Gen. George Henry Thomas recommended her for the Congressional Medal of Honor and on Nov. 11, 1864, President Andrew Johnson approved the award, making Dr. Walker the first and only female to receive the prestigious medal. There was plenty of controversy surrounding her medal and in 1917 the U.S. Congress revoked her medal due to the fact that she was not involved in "actual combat with an enemy." She was ordered to return the medal but respectfully refused and wore it until she died

on Feb. 21, 1919.

Her great granddaughter made it her mission to get her great grandmother's medal back. On June 10, 1977, President Jimmy Carter reinstated her Congressional Medal of Honor. On June 10, 1982, a 20-cent stamp was issued in her hometown Oswego, N.Y., honoring her life.

Dr. Walker was a woman that could shine in any era. Everything that defines the Congressional Medal of Honor points in her direction and even though her life was surrounded with controversy, she never once faltered. It's estimated that there are more than 1.8 million women veterans and for there to be only one female Medal of Honor recipient says everything about the importance of her character and accomplishments.

HOTLINE: How BRAC RECOMMENDATIONS EFFECT GUNFIGHTERS

Concern:

My husband and I are both active duty. He is an F-16 crew chief and I'm a medical technician. We have been stationed at Mountain Home Air Force Base for a year. We understand the F-16 squadron will be moving due to the recommendations made by the Base Realignment and Closure committee.

In order to weigh our options, I have been trying to locate current information concerning this closure, but with no success. I was hoping you could shed

some light on this topic for us. Thank you.

Colonel Shugg's response:

Thank you for your question. In November of 2005, the recommendations of the latest Base Realignment and Closure commission became law. Mountain Home Air Force Base is one of several military bases that were chosen for realignment. The base is scheduled to move the 389th Fighter Squadron between the first and third

quarters of the 2007 fiscal year and move the 390th Fighter Squadron before the 2011 fiscal year. During this same time period, the base is scheduled to bed down an additional F-15E squadron arriving from Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska. When the realignment is complete, it will help the Air Force reach its goal of consolidating its F-15 and F-16 fighters.

Air Combat Command has scheduled a site visit to Mountain Home AFB in March. During this visit, a team of BRAC

experts will meet with their functional counterparts from Mountain Home AFB to include personnel and manpower. Collectively, the team will discuss impacts on the base, such as logistics and facilities. Following the visit, Gunfighters can anticipate more information to flow as how BRAC will impact assignments and their possible relocations.

Thank you again for your hotline. If you have any other questions, please call Capt. Danny Lee, 366th Fighter Wing plans and programs, at 828-3780.



Some members of your Air Force family need your help. Have you made your *Commitment to Caring?*

The Air Force Assistance Fund campaign is underway. See your AFAF representative to give.

GRAPHIC BY SENIOR AIRMAN BRIAN STIVES

366th MDOS keeps Gunfighters healthy

By STAFF SGT. CHAWNTAIN SLOAN
GUNFIGHTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Bring them your sick. Bring them your weary. Bring them your faint of heart. The professionals assigned to the 366th Medical Operations Squadron will heal them just the same.

The squadron is comprised of four flights – medical services, maternal child, surgical operations and life skills – providing direct patient care to over 12,000 military members and their families.

Processing more than 5,000 customers a year, the medical services flight performs out-patient and ambulatory procedures and includes the emergency room, physical therapy, the pediatric, internal medicine, family medicine and immunization clinics.

“We have six family medicine providers, two pediatricians and one internal medicine physician, and they see scheduled patients about every 15 to 20 minutes – and walk-in patients too,” said Maj. Andrea Gooden, medical services flight commander. “We do our very best to see everyone that we can, and sometimes it is a matter of just running out of day to see them all.”

The pediatric, internal medicine, family medicine and immunization clinics perform the most routine functions from preventive care or immunizations to just helping sick military members and their families get better. But they also perform minor surgical procedures such as biopsies. The emergency room sees ill or injured patients who cannot get in to see their primary care provider but mainly handles individuals requiring urgent care and responds to in-flight and other on- and off-base emergencies.

“There is no typical day here,” said Major Gooden. “We have had days where every clinic and physician has had more than three walk-ins, we’ve had to respond to at least five IFEs and the line to the immunization clinic is nonstop ...”

Although the medical services flight handles a good bulk of patient-care issues, the maternal child flight includes the women’s health clinic and family care unit and is the focal point for obstetrical care before, during, and after pregnancy.

The women’s health clinic specializes in obstetrical and gynecological services for 6,500 patients each year, and care ranges from routine female annual exams to ultrasounds, infertility evaluations, and minor procedures.

The family care unit is one of only four combined medical, surgical and obstetrical units in the Air Force and one of three facilities in Air Combat Command with inpatient capabilities. They provide inpatient care to all patients ranging in age from newborns to geriatrics to include medical, surgical and obstetrical care.

Working closely with their sister flights, the surgical operations flight also keeps plenty busy, averaging 80 to 100 general, obstetric, gynecological and orthopedic surgical procedures a month.

“We do anything from hernia repairs to gallbladder removal to hysterectomies. Our department also supports emergency cases such as Cesarean sections and appendectomies to name a few,” said Maj. Fred Reeves, OIC of the surgical operations flight.

They resemble a civilian surgical unit in the types of procedures performed, the after-hour emergency care provided and in the way staff works so closely together. However,

there are a few are operating room procedures the flight has that differ from their civilian counterparts.

“A military environment warrants a timely response with everything we do in the surgical unit, thereby ensuring continuity of patient care ... so the compassion and time given to each patient is better, even in larger military facilities,” said Major Reeves.

While the maternal child, surgical operations and medical services flights address concerns about physical health, the life skills flight cares for those patients who are equally concerned about their mental well-being.

“The Air Fore places big emphasis on being fit to fight and that also includes being mentally fit to fight,” said Capt. Georgette Trezvant, life skills flight commander. “A mental injury can impact a person’s career just as much as physical injury ... so our troops and families need us to take care of their mental health needs.”

In addition to providing one-on-one counseling, the flight manages the family advocacy and alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment programs. The programs boast of an array classes on topics including but far from limited to stress and anger management, parenting and dependency issues.

“There is a stigma around the mental health profession, but the majority of patients are not mentally ill, they are struggling with family problems and stressors or they feel they have personal problems they need to address, and they come to us for help,” said Captain Trezvant. “We are pretty busy, and that’s good because that means people are taking care of themselves and dealing with current and past issues before they become an even bigger problem.”

Despite the quantity of patients seen in



PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ROBERT RICHARDSON
MEMBERS OF THE 366TH MEDICAL GROUP CARE FOR A PATIENT DURING THE PHASE II EXERCISE HELD LAST WEEK.

each flight on any given day in any given week, the medical operations squadron professionals maintain that the quality of patient care provided is just as good, if not better, than any civilian hospital.

“The Air Force consistently scores much higher than civilian healthcare facilities on various preventive health care services which are measured each month and tracked by the Air Force Surgeon General,” said Lt. Col. Debbie Beatty, 366th MDOS commander. “I think the doctors, nurses and medical technicians respect each other as valuable team members much more so than in civilian settings.”

Seatbelts save Gunfighter

By CAPT. KELLY CAHALAN
GUNFIGHTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

“When people tell you that seat belts save lives, they’re not just empty words – and my family is living testimony to that,” said Staff Sgt. Eugene Williams, 726th Air Control Squadron, whose family was involved in a single car roll-over on I-84 Feb. 18.

Sergeant Williams was driving back to Mountain Home Feb. 18 when his truck hit a patch of black ice while driving in a snowstorm. After losing control of the truck, it rolled seven times before coming to a rest on the side of I-84.

“We were on our way back from Boise and the weather started getting bad,” he said. “I changed lanes to avoid a semi-truck that started swerving on the road and the next thing I knew, my 6-year old son was calling my name.”

Shameka Williams, Sergeant William’s spouse, sustained injuries to her back, hip and leg, but because the adults were wearing their seatbelts and their son was safely buckled in his booster seat, everyone survived the accident.

“If you see my truck, you’d know there was no way we would have lived if we hadn’t been buckled up,” said Sergeant Williams.

“Staff Sergeant William’s accident could have ended very tragically,” said Karen Rogow, 366th Fighter Wing ground safety manager. “Fortunately the Williams family did everything right and walked away with minimal injuries; had they not been wearing their seatbelts, it certainly would have been much worse.”

According to 2004 statistics from the U.S. Department of Transportation, vehicle accidents caused more than 38,000 fatalities nationwide. Many of those fatalities could have been avoided had the vehicle occupants been wearing their seatbelts.

Wearing the seatbelt is not only common sense, it is the law. In the state of Idaho drivers can result in a \$10 citation for failure to buckle up. All federal installations, including Mountain Home AFB, require all vehicle passengers to wear seatbelts at all times or be secured into an age appropriate safety seats for children.

3,000 HOURS AND STILL GOING STRONG



PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ROBERT RICHARDSON

Lt. Col. Stephen Schwartz, 391st Fighter Squadron, recently recorded his 3,000th hour flying in the F-15E. The 391st FS Bold Tigers maintain 26 F-15Es on the Mountain Home AFB flightline to help the Gunfighters complete their mission.

Hope for couples who want children

TRICARE covers select infertility treatments

By MARK JECKER
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

Approximately 2.1 million married couples in the U. S. experience infertility, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. What many members of the military may not realize is that the cost of selected infertility treatments is covered by TRICARE.

The inability to conceive is a significant source of stress among married couples who want to start families. Add the rising costs of infertility treatment and it’s no wonder that many couples give up.

Because infertility is often the result of a physical condition, TRICARE coverage extends to the medically necessary services used to diagnose, monitor or treat those physical problems. These include diagnostic testing, surgical intervention and hormone therapy.

Note that many fertility drug prescriptions require the health care provider to obtain prior authorization through Express

Scripts.

Coverage Exceptions

TRICARE does not cover treatments, procedures and technologies related to artificial methods of reproduction—including artificial insemination, in-vitro fertilization, gamete intrafallopian transfer —or the reversal of a prior surgical sterilization.

However, once a TRICARE beneficiary becomes pregnant—whether by natural or artificial means—the pre- and post-natal services connected with that pregnancy are covered by TRICARE.

Prime beneficiaries and standard beneficiaries who use network providers (the TRICARE Extra option) will not be respon-

sible for non-covered services furnished by a network provider unless they agree, in advance and in writing, to pay for each specific non-covered service or drug.

Standard beneficiaries will be responsible for the total cost of services not covered by TRICARE. A complete list of infertility treatment services that are not covered by TRICARE is available at www.triwest.com as well as in the TRICARE Beneficiary Handbook and Prime Member Handbook.

Questions concerning TRICARE infertility benefits may be directed to TriWest Healthcare Alliance at 1-888-TRIWEST (1-888-874-9378).

IRAQ

- Continued from Page 1

their air academy and staff colleges. There are already initiatives under way to accomplish this, but it will take time.”

Despite the growing pains, Iraq’s air force is taking part in some coalition operations.

“The IAF is playing a limited, but effective, role in our operations,” General Eidsaune said. “Their current aircraft are kept busy transporting troops, supplies and distinguished visitors.”

In addition, the IAF plays a small role in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operations.

“Iraqi ISR assets are tasked by the local (Iraqi) army division to scan their local infrastructure, including pipelines and borders,” he said. “These assets bring back valuable

intelligence to ground commanders, and are definitely making a difference.”

At first Iraqi air base – New Al Muthana Air Base at Bagdad International Airport - opened Tuesday. The Iraqis will begin to take on ground and airfield operations of the airfield right away.

“Mastering these functions is critical for survival as a defense force,” General Eidsaune said. “The Iraqis are motivated and eager to learn. They welcome our help – our efforts are very much a partnership.”

General Barzanjy agrees.

“We are working together as one team,” General Barzanjy said. “Of course we still need support from our allies, but we are growing.”

General Eidsaune said the Iraqi Air Force is “small, but proud. One day they will be large and proud, like they once were.”



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. LANCE CHEUNG
TECH. SGT. CHARLES FRANKS OBSERVES AND INSTRUCTS AN IRAQI CREW CHIEF PERFORMING AN INSPECTION ON THE PROPELLER OF AN IRAQI C-130E HERCULES CARGO AIRCRAFT AT NEW AL MUTHANA AIR BASE, IRAQ, FEB. 22.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Senior master sergeant selects

Congratulations to the following Gunfighters on their recent selection to senior master sergeant:

SAMUEL K. ABERNATHY,
366TH OSS

JAMES M. ALMOND,
366TH CMS

JOEL K. BERRY,
366TH ADS

CARL W. BRAZIER,
366TH EMS

MARK A. BRYANT,
366TH AMXS

JANA L. CHAPMAN,
366TH FW

JOHN M. GRETH,
366TH AMXS

RONALD K. HAIRE,
366TH CMS

CHRISTOPHER LEMIS,
390TH FS

DOREEN L. LOSACCO,
366TH MOS

CRAIG M. SPRINGER,
366TH CMS

JOSEPH R. SWITALSKI,
366TH EMS

ROBERT A. TEJADA,
366TH MDOS

STEVEN T. ZIEGLER,
366TH MXG

Major selects

Congratulations to the following Gunfighters on their recent selection to major:

MATTHEW J. BRADLEY,
390TH FS

SCOTT D. BRODEUR,
366TH OSS

CARL E. CHAMPION JR.,
366TH ADS

JEFFREY S. COHEN,
389TH FS

SEAN K. GUSTAFSON,
389TH FS

THOMAS W. HANCOCK,
391ST FS

DAVID A. JOHNSON,
366TH OG

CONNIE M. MASSEY,
366TH MSS

JAMES S. MCGREW,
390TH FS

ROGER R. MESSER,
391ST FS

JAMES P. OWEN,
389TH FS

DAVID P. PEPPER,
726TH ACS

ERIC J. SPRINGER,
366TH SFS

TRENT W. TRIPPLE,
391ST FS

MICHAEL VALERIO,
366TH MDOS

GREGORY D. YOUNG,
390TH FS

NEWSLINE

Legal closure

The legal office will be closed March 17 for an official function.

STAR Volunteer Luncheon

The base STAR volunteer luncheon will be held Thursday at 11:30 a.m. at the Gunfighters Club. All unit STAR volunteers are invited to attend.

AFAF golf tournament

The Air Force Assistance Fund golf tournament is April 7 at Silver Sage Golf Course. The four-man tournament begins at 11:30 a.m. The cost of the tournament is \$120 per team. The entry fee includes 18 holes of golf, four meal tickets for the barbecue after the tournament, a golf cart and four tickets for drinks. All teams must register and pay by March 23. To register, call Capt. Jennifer Hillberg at 828-7113.

Death notification

Any person or persons having claims for or against the estate of Master Sgt. Sandra P. Bryant, 366th Medical Operations Squadron, should call Capt. Jeannie Berry, 366th MDOS summary court officer at 828-7115.

CCA helps Gunfighters get back to warfighting

By SENIOR AIRMAN
BRIAN STIVES
GUNFIGHTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

One thing many Gunfighters may not like to hear is, “Alarm Red (or Blue), MOPP Four,” coming over the giant voice at an exercise or while on deployment. However, there is something worse than that—hearing your buddy ask, “Hey, what are those red dots on your M-9 tape?”

Whenever those little dots are seen on the M-9 indicating that someone has been contaminated, wing personnel trained by the 366th Civil Engineer Squadron readiness flight kicks into action.

After going into an Alarm Black, the augmentees have two hours to set up a Contamination Control Area. The CCA limits the spread of contamination into a Toxic Free Area so personnel can work or obtain rest and relief without wear-

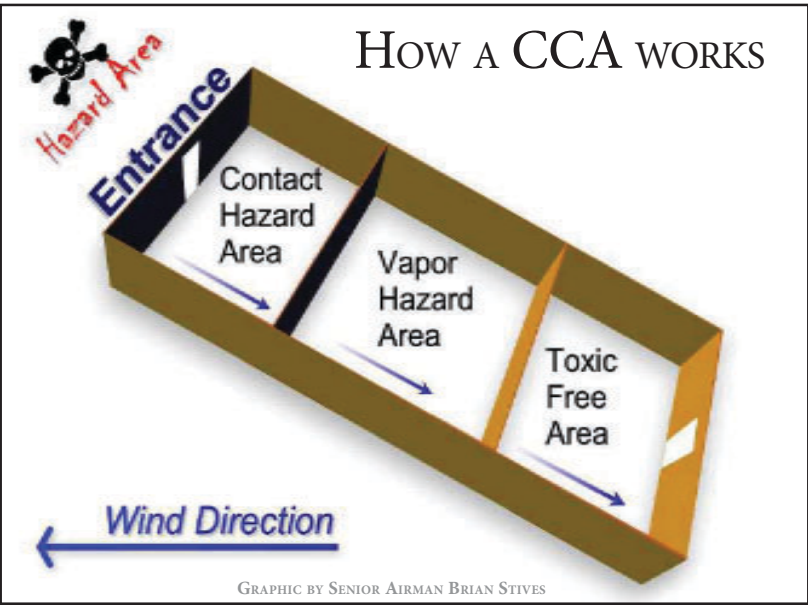
ing individual protective equipment. They also provide a controlled environment to safely remove contaminated IPE. CCAs are essential to sustain operations in a chemical environment.

“Anyone in the wing who is contaminated would get sent to the CCA to get cleaned up,” said Tech. Sgt. Kenny Walters, 366th Civil Engineer Squadron and readiness flight Exercise Evaluation Team member.

“The CCA augmentees would set up the CCA in one of three areas that we decide based on where our instruments show the contamination is located at or where the winds could possibly blow the contaminants,” said Airman 1st Class Zack Albright, 366th CES readiness flight.

The process is pretty simple for getting decontaminated, and many Gunfighters may remember a CCA from their chemical training.

The first area is the transporta-



tion drop off point. This is where the contaminated person is dropped off and splits into “buddy teams.” The buddies check each other and decontaminate each other with an M291 or M295 kits and then proceed to the holding area.

Once inside the holding area, the

individuals would remove their individual protective equipment and anything other than their chemical gear (ex. helmets, web gear and harnesses). They would also clean out their pockets and decontaminate their gloves.

“It is really important that they

continually decontaminate their gloves,” said Sergeant Walters,” because they can very easily cross contaminate themselves or their buddies during this process.”

Once they are done in the holding area, they would then move to the boot decontamination wash pit and walk to the hood removal station.

“When they go through the boot wash pit, they need to make sure to drag their feet through it, so they can get the contamination off the boots and not splash around and get the contamination outside the pit,” said Sergeant Walters.

The hood removal station is where the hood is removed from the mask. The hood must be rolled up with caution so as not to contaminate the buddies head. After removing the hood, the boots are removed at the boot removal station.

“This is the area where most people cross contaminate themselves,” said Airman Albright. “Many

times, the boots are hard to get off and when they do come off, the individual almost puts their foot back down on the contaminated side of the bench. If that happens, they must then remove their combat boot and walk through the rest of the CCA in their sock.”

The next station is where the trousers and overcoat are removed. Once again, extreme caution should be applied to this area as well.

The final station is the removal of the mask itself.

“Individuals are advised to take three deep breaths and hold the last one. Then remove the mask and take about four steps before breathing again,” said Sergeant Walters.

From that point on, Gunfighters are reissued their gear to go back into the fight or are sent home for the day, to get some well deserved rest and relaxation after fighting off the bad guys.

GUNFIGHTERS PARTICIPATE IN PHASE II EXERCISE



PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ROBERT RICHARDSON

TOP - AIRMEN 1ST CLASS JAMES KELLEY (LEFT) AND KENTON CHIGBROW, BOTH FROM THE 366TH AEROMEDICAL DENTAL SQUADRON, CLEAR THEIR WEAPONS BEFORE BEGINNING THEIR SECURITY DETAIL MARCH 1 DURING THE PHASE II EXERCISE.

RIGHT - MEMBERS OF THE 366TH MEDICAL GROUP GET INTO MISSION ORIENTED PROTECTIVE POSTURE FOUR DURING THE EXERCISE MARCH 2. THE WING PARTICIPATED IN THE EXERCISE FROM FEB. 27 THROUGH MARCH 3.



PHOTO BY AIRMAN DANA HILL

Canadians train with reservists

STORY AND PHOTO
By LISA MACIAS
482ND FIGHTER WING
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

HOMESTEAD AIR RESERVE BASE, Fla. - Canadian Airmen are participating with Reserve Airmen in a joint international exercise known as ChumEx.

As a yearly event, 93rd Fighter Squadron officials here invite air force fighter units with dissimilar aircraft from allied nations to play “war games” and practice dogfighting skills.

This year, the 425th Tactical Fighter Squadron from Bagotville, Canada, was the first unit to arrive, bringing five CF-

18 Hornets and 15 ground crewmembers to begin the exercise.

We “throw out the bait and stir up the fight, which is why it is referred to as ChumEx,” said Lt. Col. Mike Lesman, a pilot with the 93rd Fighter Squadron.

One of the major aspects of ChumEx is the dogfighting, where the pilots go up in a six vs. eight or six vs. 10 flying formation. The pilots from both units take turns playing the role of an adversary, or Red Air, simulating a MiG-29 or Su-27.

Not only is this a positive training experience for the pilots, but it also resembles a real-world scenario where Ameri-

cans would serve alongside fellow coalition pilots in a NATO or multinational mission.

“It is important for us to continue these types of exercises with our American brothers,” said Maj. Sylvain Menard, a CF-18 pilot with the 425th.

“Not only is there an exchange of knowledge, but we enjoy the social aspect as well,” he said.

The training provides a “ton of experience,” said Capt. Aaron MacLuskie, another CF-18 pilot with the 425th.

The good weather seemed important as well.

“It is 30 below back in Canada,” he said.

The next unit to arrive for ChumEx in the monthlong training will be the 441st Tactical Fighter Squadron from Cold Lake, Canada. In total, 87 Canadian Airmen will be involved in the exercise.

Another incentive in ChumEx is the familiarization rides the pilots will receive. The American F-16 Fighting Falcon pilots will have the opportunity to fly in the Canadian CF-18s and vice versa.

After a busy hurricane season, followed by a four-month deployment to Iraq, the Airmen here said they are happy to get some realistic training done while the weather is good.

“It’s great to have our buddies from Canada down here,” Colonel Lesman said.

What can you do about identity theft?

By SPECIAL AGENT
JAMES WILLIAMS
22ND AIR REFUELING
WING OFFICE OF
SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

MCCONNELL AIR FORCE BASE, Kan. - Identity theft is an increasingly common occurrence. Two studies concluded that there were 7 million victims between June 2002 and 2003. The Federal Trade Commission number is closer to 10 million but also includes credit card takeover.

According to the FTC, identity theft is the most common form of consumer fraud, with thefts totaling more than \$100 million from financial institutions, an average of more than \$7,000 per victim.

Since law enforcement nationwide does not often collect statistics about ID theft, there is no one answer; however, the growth rate was estimated to be about 25 percent in this crime between 2003 and 2005. Estimates on losses range from \$100 million to more than \$1 billion.

With awareness comes the ability to avoid becoming a victim.

Despite your efforts to manage the flow of personal information or to keep it to yourself, skilled

identity thieves may use a variety of methods to gain access to your data.

- Identity thieves get personal information from businesses or other institutions by stealing records or information while they’re on the job, bribing an employee who has access to these records, hacking these records, conning information out of employees.

- They may steal mail, including bank and credit card statements, credit card offers, new checks and tax information.

- They may rummage through household trash, the trash at businesses, or public trash dumps in a practice known as “dumpster diving.”

- They may get credit reports by abusing their employer’s authorized access to them, or by posing as a landlord, employer or someone else who may have a legal right to access.

- They may steal credit or debit card numbers by capturing the information in a data storage device in a practice known as “skimming.” They may swipe your card for an actual purchase, or attach a device to an ATM where you may enter or swipe your card.

- They may steal your wallet or purse.

- They may complete a “change of address form” to divert your mail to another location.

- They may steal personal information they find in your home.

- They may steal personal information from you through e-mail or phone by posing as legitimate companies and claiming that you have a problem with your account. This practice is known as “phishing” online, or pretexting by phone.

The following guidance offers tips on what to do if you lose your wallet or checkbook, as well as steps you can take now to prevent identity theft.

- Order your checks with your first initial (instead of your full name) and last name printed on them. A random person trying to use your checks won’t know whether you sign your name or first initial last name, but your bank will know.

- Use your work number and address instead of your home information on your checks.

- Never have your social security number printed on your checks.

- Photocopy, front and back, all of the contents of your wallet. It will be easier to account for items in your wallet should it be taken, as well as facilitate the cancellation of credit cards.

- Immediately call the police if you wallet or any of the contents are stolen. If you delay, it may appear to creditors

that you did not try to mitigate your damages.

- Contact all three of the national credit reporting agencies to place fraud alert on your name and social security number. It alerts companies that your information has been stolen. If someone tries to get a credit card using your name, you have to be contacted before new credit can be authorized. The numbers of the credit reporting organizations are: Equifax, (888) 766-0008; Experian, (888) 397-3742; Trans Union, (800) 680-7289.

A recent amendment to the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act requires each of the major nationwide consumer reporting companies to provide a free copy of your credit reports, at your request, once every 12 months. Since September, free reports are accessible to all Americans, regardless of where they live.

To order a free annual report from one or all the national consumer reporting companies, call toll-free (877) 322-8228. Do not contact the three nationwide consumer reporting companies individually.

AFOSI is the office of primary responsibility for identity theft investigations for the Air Force. If you are a victim with monetary loss, please contact your local AFOSI detachment or security forces law enforcement desk.



A CANADIAN CREW CHIEF FROM THE 425TH TACTICAL FIGHTER SQUADRON SHOWS FIREFIGHTERS FROM HOMESTEAD AIR RESERVE BASE, FLA., HOW TO APPROACH THE CF-18 AND CONDUCT RESCUE PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY.

SERVICES

Auto skills center

Contract mechanic and paint and body tech — Work is done by appointment only. There are now two mechanics on staff to better serve the Gunfighters. To make an appointment, call 828-2295.

Bowling center

Nine-pin no-tap — Today at 10:30 p.m. Bowl for \$10.

Family special — Bowl for \$1 a game every Sunday.

For more information, call 828-6329.

Community center

Chess tournament — Saturday at 10 a.m. The event is free. For more information, call Rickey Weathers at 587-8968.

St. Patrick’s Day All-nighter — March 17 beginning at 9 p.m. in Afterburner’s Lounge. Door prizes include DVD’s and CD’s.

Instructors needed — The community center is looking for experienced instructors for crafts, dance, music, cooking, interior decorating, self defense, sewing, quilting, cake decorating and stamping.

Photography classes — Tuesday and Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m. The cost is \$30 for eight sessions.

Salsa classes — Mondays and Wednesdays from 6 to 7 p.m. The cost is \$25 for five sessions.

Spanish classes — Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The cost is \$30 for eight sessions.

Dog obedience class — Saturday from 10 to 11 a.m. The cost is \$35 for four sessions.

For more information, call 828-2246.

Youth programs

School-age spring break camp — Open registration will be held Monday through March 17 from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Many activities are planned including field trips, movies, swimming, bowling, and arts and crafts. Breakfast, lunch and snack are included in fees. Fees are based on income.

Gymnastics instructor — Youth programs is looking for an experienced gymnastics instructor.

For more information, call 828-2501.

Outdoor adventure program

Come to the outdoor adventure program building (Building 2800 across from the youth center) to get a calendar to help plan all outdoor adventures.

For more information, call 828-6333.

Outdoor recreation supply

Video rentals — Video rentals are available for sportsmens needs. Weekend rentals are \$1, day rates are \$0.75 and additional days are \$0.50.

Sportsman camp trailer special — Camp trailers can be reserved on the first working day of the month and may be reserved for the following month. Prices are \$60 per weekend, \$45 over night and \$15 each additional day.

For more information, call 828-2237.

Library

March book adventure — Come see what exciting historical fiction adventures you can get lost in.

Wireless Internet — Bring in a laptop computer and access free wireless Internet from inside the library or from the Pony Espresso Café.

Multimedia center — Features color copier, scanner and photo printing.

Story time — Wednesdays at 1 p.m. for supervised children ages 3 to 5.

Pony Espresso Café —Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. They serve a variety of coffee drinks, smoothies and pastries.

Video club — Members pay \$12 per year and can borrow up to three videos at a time for a one-week rental.

For more information, call 828-2326.

Pizza Etc.

March special — Fish sandwich, fries or tots, and a 24-ounce soda for \$6.

Soup of the day —

Monday — Chicken gumbo

Tuesday — Chicken and dumplings

Wednesday — Creamy potato with bacon

Thursday — Cream of broccoli

Friday — Clam chowder

Gunfighters club

Cook your own steak or chicken — Thursday March 30 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. \$3.95 for club members.

Gunfighters membership night — Wednesday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Have a free buffet and an opportunity to win \$500 in door prizes. No reservations needed for this event.

Gunfighters night buffet — March 29 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Dinner is a members only benefit. \$3.66 for adults and \$1.80 for children under 12.

Swimming Pool

Hydrobics — Available Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 to 11 a.m. The cost is \$20 per month or \$2 per session. All ages are invited to participate.

Silver Sage Golf Course

Season Opening — Saturday and Sunday. New nine-hole, twilight and intramural greens fees will be in effect all weekend long. Merchandise blow-out sale during the event.

IGA Handicap Golf Tournament — This is an individual stroke play event using the Callaway Handicap Formula. March 18 starting at 11 a.m. Register

before Wednesday. Entry fee is \$30 and includes greens frees, cart, and a membership to the Idaho Golf Association.

April “Ringer” Tournament — Silver Sage Golf Course will conduct a month long “Ringer” tournament. Participants must play one 18-hole round per week with a fellow competitor. Participants will make their hole-by-hole gross scores each week on the provided score sheet. The players’ total score will be a combination of their best scores on each hole throughout the four rounds of the competition. Sign up by March 28.

CHAPEL

Catholic

Sunday mass — 8 a.m.

CCD Sunday — 9:30 to 10:45 a.m. for 3 year olds to adults; located in the Religious Education Building.

Daily mass — Wednesday at 11:30 a.m.

Protestant

Sunday school — 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. for 6 month olds to adults; located in the Religious Education Building.

Traditional service — Sunday at 11 a.m. Also provided at this time are a children’s church for 4 year olds to second grade and Wee Joy for 6 months to 5 years.

Gospel Jubilee Service — Sunday at 1:30 p.m.

Protestant extras — Protestant Women of the Chapel meets Wednesday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Religious Education Building.

WELLNESS

Siblings

Children learn to understand and deal with the unique relationship of being a sibling and what to expect when the baby arrives. The class will be held Wednesday from 10 a.m. to noon at family advocacy. To register, call 828-7566 or 828-7520.

Saving and investing

Start planning for the future with the money made today. It’s never too early or too late to start saving or investing and the longer money is working, the greater the return. Learn about the various types of savings and investment options and how to work them into the financial future. Class will be held March 22 from 8 to 11 a.m. at the family support center. To register, call 828-2458.

EDUCATION NEWS

Education grant

In recognition of escalating college costs, the society increased the individual award amount under its Gen. Henry H. Arnold Education Grant Program to \$2,000. The program continues to be offered to children and spouses (residing stateside) of active duty and several other candidate categories. The deadline to apply is March 10. For more information and an application, call the family support center at 828-2458.

Spouse scholarship

The National Military Family Association’s Joanne Holbrook Patton Military Spouse Scholarships are awarded to spouses of uniformed servicemembers to obtain professional certification or to attend undergraduate or graduate school. Scholarships are normally in the amount of \$1,000. To be considered, an application must be completed by April 15. For more information, go to the Web site at [www.nmfa.org/site/](http://www.nmfa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Spouse_Scholarship)

University of Oklahoma

The first class of the summer semester will be public budgeting and finance. This is a required class in the MPA program. This class is scheduled for May 7 to 13 and the last day to enroll is April 13. Visit the University of Oklahoma’s Web site at www.gouu.ou.edu for a complete list of programs and classes. The Master of Public Administration program is open to all. For more information, call the OU site manager at 828-4188 or stop by the education center.

HOUSING NEWS

Lawn care

Spring is fast approaching. Now is the time for base housing occupants to think about lawn care. With very little effort, there are several things they can do to

VIPER VISITS



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. CHAWNTAIN SLOAN

VIPER GETS OFF THE BUS AFTER WORKING A 12-HOUR SHIFT DURING LAST WEEK’S PHASE II OPERATIONAL READINESS EXERCISE. THE 366TH LOGISTICS READINESS SQUADRON USED THE BUSES TO TAKE GUNFIGHTERS TO THEIR WORK LOCATIONS DURING THE EXERCISE. IF YOU WOULD LIKE VIPER TO VISIT YOUR SHOP, CALL THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE AT 828-6800 OR SEND AN E-MAIL TO PA.NEWS@MOUNTAINHOME.AF.MIL.

maintain their lawns and have them looking great.

The 366th Civil Engineer Squadron self-help store has a thatcher and aerator to use; all anyone has to do is stop by the store on Liberator Street and check one out. This is the best time to thatch and aerate the lawns. Benefits include:

- Thatching removes dead grass and also thins the grass to promote new growth.
- Aerating opens the soil to allow the ground to breathe and absorb water better.
- Allows fertilizer and mulched grasses to continually feed the lawn.

Each year, a contractor fertilizes the housing areas in October. This ensures the lawns receive the proper application of slow release fertilizer. The housing office discourages housing occupants from fertilizing their lawn to avoid over application and prevent lawn damage due to extreme summer temperatures and lack of rain. Should housing occupants choose to fertilize their own lawn, it’s recommended to use a fertilizer that doesn’t exceed 16-percent nitrogen, 8-percent potassium, 8-percent phosphorus and 4-percent iron.

Because of the October fertilization, it’s recommended housing occupants only fertilize during May. High temperatures experienced during the summer months combined with excessive fertilizing can result in burning and permanently damaging the grass when fertilizing is done between June and September.

The proper lawn mower height is extremely important in a desert environment such as here at Mountain Home Air Force Base. For optimum results, we recommend lawn mower blades be no lower than 3 inches. This keeps the grass at a height where the sun cannot easily burn the lawn. Taller grass shades itself; therefore, it requires less water while conserving one of our natural resources and protects itself by making it less susceptible to disease.

It’s also recommended to mulch grass clippings, rather than catching and bagging them. Mulching allows finely chopped clippings to remain on the lawn. Grass clippings are natural fertilizers containing many of the micro-nutrients essential for growth, vigor and disease resistance.

When mulching the lawn, the best method is to mow clockwise. In doing so, the clippings will continually be re-cut, thereby grinding them into pulp. Mowing in this fashion prevents large clumps of grass from appearing after mowing. In addition, when mowing the lawn, alternate the mowing pattern each week to help prevent the grass from matting or lying over and allow for a cleaner cut.

Now that we have given several tips to

having a luscious green lawn, how does someone continue to keep their lawns looking like an “oasis” when the local annual rainfall is only 8 to 13 inches annually? The oasis comes with a heavy sacrifice of a precious resource – water from deep within the earth.

In an effort to conserve water, the base watering policies are simple:

- Occupants residing in the Presidential Acres, Dunes and the 8000 housing areas can water on odd numbered days.
- All other housing areas can water on even days.
- Watering is only be allowed from 5 to 9 a.m. and 6 to 10 p.m.
- Hand watering of bushes, shrubs and flower gardens is authorized at anytime.
- If you have a sprinkler system, it is preset and maintained by housing maintenance. If problems are encountered with the system, call 832-4643.

By complying with these watering policies, we all help reduce the amount of evaporation caused by the extreme heat experienced in the summer months. Historically, the average daily consumption of water during the winter months ranges is only one million gallons, compared to as high as six million gallons per day during the summer.

Don’t forget to trim the bushes and decorative grasses. They should be cut back yearly to lengthen their life expectancy. Pampas grass should be trimmed before the new green shoots start coming up. They should be rounded off close to the ground in the shape of a ball.

Finally, don’t forget to be prepared for weekly yard inspections by the housing staff. Most inspections are conducted on Tuesdays, but may be conducted anytime. If everyone works together and shows home ownership, we will be able to make our housing areas a place we can all be proud of.

OUTSIDE THE GATES

21st Annual Paw ‘n Pole

Often called “The last remaining crazy Ketchum tradition,” the Paw ‘n Pole includes Nordic and snowshoe races with your dog (or a borrowed Animal Shelter dog) on a leash. This year’s costume theme is “The Chinese Year of the Dog.” Race registration begins Sunday at 9 a.m., pet tricks, costume contest and awards will follow the races. Location: Sun Valley Gun Club. Admission: \$10 per racer, \$15 per family of racers; spectators free. Admission fee includes a barbecue lunch and raffle entry for a 2006-2007 Galena Trail Pass.

THE BIG SCREEN



Today – *Tristan and Isolde* – PG-13 – 7 p.m. – starring James Franco and Sophia Myles. In the medieval legend of Tristan and Isolde, young lovers become doomed against the forces of royal politics. English knight Tristan wins the hand of the daughter of the Irish King, but the love threatens the truce between their two countries. 2 hours, 5 minutes.



Saturday and Sunday – *Big Momma’s House 2* – PG-13 – 7 p.m. – starring Martin Lawrence and Nia Long. The continuing adventures of master-of-

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday – Theater closed.